

- There is documented growth for FY 14 and FY 15 in the DCPD budget including additional funding for the adoption subsidy program and independent living programs.
- DCF has been able to preserve the Prevention budget over the last four years. There has been growth in state funding; however there has been significant growth in terms of federal funding. The big focus of DCF work next year is the development of a data system for the Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) and Division on Women (DOW), which will allow for the further discussion regarding trending.

Two years ago, the federal government issued new guidance for state child welfare to focus on putting out grant funding for systems to shift towards becoming a more trauma informed systems of care. DCF has entered into a contract with University Behavioral Health Care (UBHC) to do trauma needs assessments and will be using the service instrument that was developed by the Chadwick Center. The purpose of the needs assessment is to move towards transitioning DCF services to evidence based practice. DCF will be putting together a workgroup to help develop a protocol. The needs assessment has three components: a survey, focus groups and content analysis. DCF is in the early stages of the process.

Starting June 2014, DCF will kick off a year-long skill building series for DCF staff and some of DCF's key systems partners focusing on trauma. In June 2014, Dr. Victoria Kelly from Delaware will offer an overview of trauma informed system of care and the impact of staff in the child public welfare agency. In September 2014 (exact dates to be determined) Dr. Bruce Perry will be the keynote speaker. Dr. Perry will arrive a day in advance to do a separate training for DCF staff and the second day will be the Task Force Skill Building Conference which is open to the public, Task Force Committee members and DCF staff. In January 2015, Daniel Siegel, from Texas will be speaking about trauma impact and irreversibility. Then, in June 2015, Ken Verni, will be doing a session on mindfulness and vicarious trauma. By this point, DCF's goal is to have the UBHC trauma needs assessment completed.

The Task Force was informed that the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) was asked by the US Department of Health and Human Services region to host and co-sponsor a two-day training on trauma informed care for women in Newark on April 15 and 16, 2014. Commissioner Blake asked that Jacqueline Sanchez-Perez, Division on Women (DOW) be invited and her contact information will be emailed to Diana Autin.

Marygrace Billek thanked the Commissioner for her assistance with helping the families in the Ewing explosion. There are about forty displaced families due to the explosion.

The Commissioner thanked Cecilia Zalkind for her long time commitment as the Chairperson of the Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS). Cecilia has resigned as the Chairperson of SORS however; she is still a member of the Task Force.

Commissioner Blake offered to provide details about the following items at the next Task Force Meeting:

- Update the Task Force on the strategic plan
- DCF priorities for the next two years

- DCF efforts to integrate the early childhood work into the child protection system.

Following the Commissioner Blake's update, she excused herself from the meeting to travel to the 2014 NJ Child Assault Prevention Awards luncheon and speak. Joseph Ribsam, Assistant Commissioner, served as Commissioner Blake's designee for the balance of the meeting.

NJTFCAN Business

Review and Discuss Drafted Prevention Standards and Prevention Plan

Maura Somers Dughi thanked Commissioner Blake and DCF Executive staff for their role in assisting the Prevention Committee on March 24, 2014 with the prevention plan and retreat that was supported by Clarus Consulting Group. There were forty people in attendance at the retreat.

Maura informed the Task Force that the Prevention Committee has approved "The Standards of Prevention Programs - Building Success through Family Support" and that the goal of the March 28th meeting was to obtain the Task Force's approval. An overview was provided on how the Standards came about in New Jersey. In 2003, the Standards for Prevention Programs was copy written to the Department of Human Services. Since then, there has been much more research, studies and measureable outcomes. With DCF's cooperation, the process took a year and a half to update the Standards. The updated Standards include research on protective factors and strengthening families in accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) essentials for childhood and the adverse childhood experience study. Joseph Ribsam informed the Task Force that the copyright for the standards will be transferred to DCF.

Maura informed the Task Force that the child fatality statistic noted in the Standards needs to be verified with DCF prior to its final approval.

Maura informed the Task Force of the Standards Workgroup that was chaired by Kerrie Ocasio. This workgroup created the grid that accompanies the Prevention Plan. At the end of each self-assessment, there is an opportunity to highlight priority areas to work on and strategies for improvement of each category. This grid was intended to be used as a tool for ongoing quality improvement. The references have been updated to include the latest research.

Dr. Finkel thanked everyone for their hard work and the Task Force voted and approved the Standards. Clarus Consulting Group has agreed to format the plan for the kick-off on April 28, 2014 at DCF Professional Center in New Brunswick.

The Task Force was informed that the purpose of the March 28th meeting was to discuss the Prevention Plan and to answer questions. The Plan has not been approved by the Prevention Committee and there will be no vote on the plan at the March 28th Task Force Meeting. The Prevention Committee will vote on the plan at their April 10, 2014 meeting and the Task Force will vote electronically on April 4, 2014.

Diana reviewed the prevention plan with the Task Force. There was a brief discussion around the feedback that went into the development of the plan through the surveys, focus groups, and interviews. There are graphs, charts and appendices at the end of

the report to make this information accessible to people. The Plan includes an overview of the framework around protective factors from the Administration of Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), the Center for the Study of Social Policy and the Center for Disease Control. The Plan references the importance of collaboration and integration of initiatives in New Jersey. One of the strategic priorities and goals is to increase public awareness in prevention efforts. The next steps section of the plan discusses working with stakeholders to develop and implement an action plan and collaborate with prevention partners to track its implementation/impact and report back to policy makers and the public about its effectiveness.

SORS – Elect New SORS Chair and Thank Ceil

The Task Force thanked Cecilia Zalkind for her dedicated years as the Chairperson of SORS. Rita Gulden, SORS Vice-Chairperson, was nominated to be the new Chairperson of SORS. The Task Force voted and approved Rita Gulden as SORS new Chairperson.

Discuss Child Death Review and the State Medical Examiner - Dr. Martin Finkel

Dr. Finkel drafted a summary statement regarding child death review and the state medical examiner. Dr. Finkel discussed some of the major challenges with the state medical examiner's office on decisions regarding a child's death being an accident or a homicide. It was discussed that there is a great need to improve the quality of an autopsy and one of the difficulties is the funding of the system. The Task Force members were emailed a copy from Senator Joseph Vitale state legislation on this matter. Joseph Ribsam stated that DCF does not have an official position on the bill. Letters have been written to the Governor and the Task Force believes that a workgroup needs to be created to provide leadership and direction. It was stated that this ad hoc workgroup could review and make some recommendations. Dr. Finkel will inform Senator Vitale of the Task Force's decision to support his bill if he decided to move forward on this matter. Dr. Finkel invited members to email him if they would like to be added to this ad hoc committee.

Subcommittee/Committee Updates

Communication Committee Update – Kathy Collins

Kathy informed the Committee that the Fourth Annual Task Force report is due to DCF for formatting on May 15, 2014. Information for the report is collected from DCF, meeting Minutes and Task Force/committee summaries. Following the meeting, Ifeanyi will email each Committee Chair a copy of their last year's summary for them to update. The report covers the reporting period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. There was a brief discussion around the due date for the report. Joseph Ribsam stated June was set for this report, but it was not statutory and there is the ability to change the due date as long as it is completed within the calendar year. The Communication Committee is on schedule with this year's report; however there will be further discussion to change the due date to August or September for future reports. Also, the Communication Committee would like to add a link to the prevention plan, Superstorm Sandy recovery plan, and human trafficking on the report.

Kathy would like to schedule a conference call with the Committee/Subcommittees to discuss how the Communication Committee can assist each with their efforts on communicating their goals.

The Communication Committee was invited to the Prevention Plan Kick-Off on April 28, 2014 at the DCF Professional Center from 9:30 am until 12:30 pm.

Prevention Committee Update- Maura

No further updates to convey for the Prevention Committee.

Protection Committee Update

No update provided.

SORS Update - Rita

Rita discussed SORS two focuses: visitation and the reports on visitation. The Subcommittee is working with DCF on a number of questions that have been raised. The reform plan only considers for visitation reporting on those children who have reunification as the goal, which is something SORS is questioning and requesting more information. A workgroup is being developing with Linda Porcaro, Director of Youth Services in Somerset County. Linda will be leading the workgroup and reviewing the last survey from SORS for staff satisfaction. Elizabeth Bowman, DCF Assistant Commissioner will be working to coordinate this as well.

There was a discussion on visitation requirements for the children that are being tracked. According to the monitoring report, there are some challenges. Assistant Commissioners Lisa von Pier and Elizabeth Bowman are going to look at exactly what is collected for visitation and how things might be adapted. It was suggested to have some focus groups with families around what makes visitation successful. A request went out to Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) to see what their contract entails regarding training around this issue. It was also discussed that there are informal visitations happening are not currently tracked. The Task Force was reminded that relatives now have about one third to one half children in placement, which means liberal visitation that does not always get recorded in NJSPIRIT.

There was a brief discussion around resource parents supervising visitation. Historically having resource families supervise visitation has not always been encouraged or discussed.

Announcements

- April 28, 2014 is the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect- Prevention Committee, Statewide Prevention Plan Roll Out at DCF Professional Center in New Brunswick from 9:30am until 12:30pm.
- May 6, 2014 at 6:00pm Cris Beam who wrote, To the End of June: The Intimate Life of American Foster Care, will be giving a presentation at the Middlesex Fire Academy for anyone who would like to attend.
- April 23, 2014 - CARES Institute Annual Symposium. To register visit caresinstitute.org and there is no cost. Charles Wilson, MSSW, Director, California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare is presenting on "Implementing statewide trauma informed evidence based best practices: rationale and process," and Dr. Sandra A. Lopez will be speaking in the afternoon on "Addressing and Reducing the Risk of Vicarious Trauma." DCF key

staff will have the opportunity to speaker with Dr. Wilson. The head of Chadwick Center is going to be a part of the experts on child abuse and neglect.

Next Meeting/Announcement – May 23, 2014 - Trenton

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